

*Growing and
Learning
in*

**New Hampshire
Head Start**

2012



Acknowledgements

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*New Hampshire Department
of Health & Human Services
Division for Children, Youth & Families
Head Start State Collaboration Office
2012*

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“Head Start is the most successful, longest-running national school readiness program in the United States.”

- National Head Start Association

“How many of you have heard of Head Start?” asked a guest lecturer at a Plymouth State University class for future early childhood educators. All hands in the room shot up. One enthusiastic young woman revealed, “I was a Head Start child!”

The student in the story is one of more than 27 million children aged birth through five and their families who have graduated from the program since it was created in 1965 as part of President Lyndon Johnson’s “war on poverty.” What began as a popular summer program for over half a million preschoolers now serves about 968,000 children and their families throughout the nation each year. This includes 166,000 infants and toddlers and 16,710 pregnant women¹.

Today, Head Start/Early Head Start prides itself on being one of the most comprehensive early childhood programs in the country. In addition to education, Head Start offers an array of services for both children and their parents in a variety of home- and center-based programs. A major goal for Head Start is to prepare children for success in school and in life. In fact, among Head Start graduates are doctors, lawyers, teachers, famous athletes, musicians, and members of Congress.

Research tells us that parents and family members who have positive, trusting relationships with those who support them are more likely to become engaged in their young children’s development and learning². One unique feature of Head Start/Early Head Start is its firm commitment to meaningful parent, family and community engagement.



Parent, family and community engagement means:

...building relationships with families that support family well-being, strong parent-child relationships and ongoing learning and development of parents and children alike. It refers to the beliefs, attitudes, behaviors and activities of families that support their children’s positive development from early childhood through young adulthood. Family engagement happens in the home, early childhood program, school and community, and is a shared responsibility with all those who support children’s learning³.

In Head Start/Early Head Start parents are:

- Engaged in their child's growth and development, along with program activities;
- Hired to work in the program, which provides them with employment and an opportunity to enhance their parenting skills; and
- Recruited to participate in program governance by serving on the policy council. In fact, Head Start performance standards require that at least half of policy council members be parents of children currently enrolled in the program.

Parents and families also work together with staff on a variety of self-selected goals and priorities for themselves and their children. Goals may range from quitting smoking and offering more nutritious meals at home to getting a GED and starting an Individual Development Account (savings plan).

To ensure that services are coordinated and resources are maximized, Head Start/Early Head Start also partners with many community organizations concerned with young children and families.



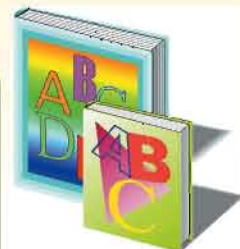
***"Head Start did exactly what it says,
gave me a head start in life!"
– Head Start Parent***

***A hallmark of
Head Start/Early***

***Head Start is parent,
family & community
engagement.***

Head Start is funded and monitored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (ACF). In 1995, ACF established Early Head Start to help ensure that women had healthy pregnancies, very young children (from birth to age 3) were growing and developing as expected, and families were functioning well.

In the 2010-2011 program year, ACF allocated more than \$7.1 billion for Head Start and Early Head Start¹. However, far too many eligible children are not served due to lack of funding. Nationally, Head Start serves less than 45% of eligible preschoolers and less than 3% of eligible infants and toddlers and their families⁴.



Quality early childhood programs have a positive, long lasting impact on the lives of young children. These programs can combat the effects of poverty and make a critical difference in children's developmental outcomes⁵. Recent research has shown that Head Start does just that. Not only does Head Start promote gains in children's learning and development, but it also improves children's health and promotes family self-sufficiency. And, it's a sound investment!

Head Start prepares children to succeed in school and in life by:

- Using an integrated curriculum that addresses the essential domains of school readiness in *The Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework*⁶;
- Collecting and using data to track children's progress and make improvements in services;
- Creating an individualized Wellness Plan with families that promotes healthy development for every child;
- Engaging parents as partners and encouraging learning and leadership;
- Fostering a community of learning and support among staff to promote innovation, continuous improvement and integrated services across education, family services and health; and
- Collaborating with local schools to exchange information about children and programs and to align services for early learning, health and family engagement³.

Infants and toddlers in Early Head Start experience:

- Gains in cognitive/language development;
- Increased attention during play; and
- More positive interactions with their parents.

Positive outcomes for preschoolers include:

- Growth in math, early writing and vocabulary. Children whose parents read to them more frequently had higher vocabulary scores;
- Gains in early reading for 4-year-olds;
- Increased social/relational skills;
- Accelerated skill development in Kindergarten;
- Fewer referrals to special education; and
- Higher attendance rates in kindergarten and lower chronic absence rates in first through third grades⁴.

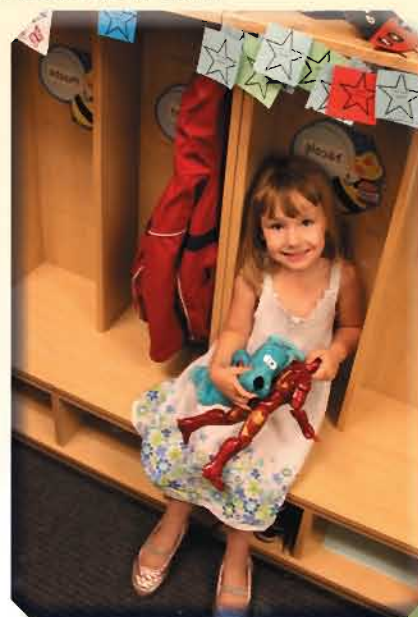
And the benefits last.

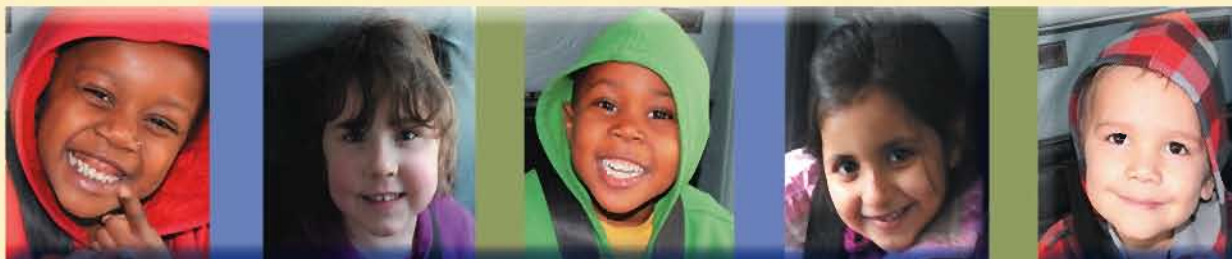
As compared to children living in poverty who did not attend Head Start, **children in Head Start are more likely to:**

- Graduate from High School;
- Attend college; and
- Earn higher wages.

And are less likely to:

- Repeat a grade;
- Need special education services; and
- Become incarcerated.





Head Start improves children's health by:

- **Assuring that they have a medical home** with up-to-date preventative and primary health care. Medical homes (continuous, coordinated medical care) are associated with better health and fewer health disparities between children in families with low and higher incomes⁷;
- **Assuring that they have access to a dental home**, including preventative care and treatment. According to the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, "Tooth decay is the most common chronic childhood disease - five times more common than asthma - and 51 million school hours are lost to it every year." Additionally, children in families with low incomes have higher rates of tooth decay and more difficulty accessing dental care⁸; and
- **Assuring that they have access to mental health services.** A young child's emotional development is directly related to later school outcomes. Head Start fosters healthy emotional development by providing mental health services and/or making appropriate referrals.

Head Start **has reduced mortality rates** from preventable conditions for 5-to 9-year-olds by as much as 50%⁴.

Head Start benefits families by:

- **Increasing parents' engagement with their children.** Parents also provide their children with more support for learning;
- **Increasing self-sufficiency** (such as assisting families to get jobs or pursue higher education); and
- **Increasing family stability.**

Head Start is a sound investment:

- For every \$1 invested in Head Start, America reaps a return on investment ranging from \$7 to \$9.
- Head Start saves tax dollars. For example, Head Start decreases the need for special education services in elementary schools. Additionally, because Head Start children are 12% less likely to have been charged with a crime, states can save \$29,000 per year per person in reduced prison census⁹.

"After the program costs and the benefits to young children are weighed, Head Start and Early Head Start can be considered a sound investment of taxpayers' dollars¹⁰."



Programs and Funding¹¹

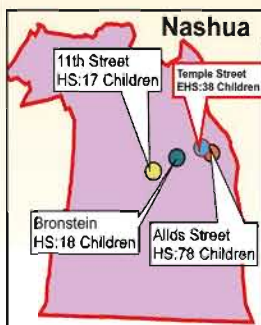
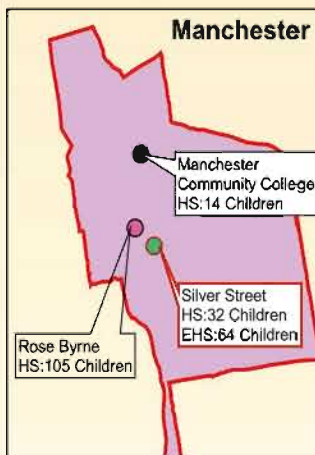
In fiscal year 2011, NH received \$11,580,274 from ACF for five Head Start programs and \$3,075,637 for Early Head Start programs (known as "grantees"). Funding is allocated directly from the ACF Office of Head Start to grantee agencies, which, in NH, are Community Action Programs. As the map shows, NH Head Start grantees administer 43 sites throughout the State. NH also received \$225,364 for training and technical assistance to Head Start/Early Head Start programs and \$125,000 for the Head Start State Collaboration Office.

Location of New Hampshire Head Start/Early Head Start Programs With Number of Children Served March 2012

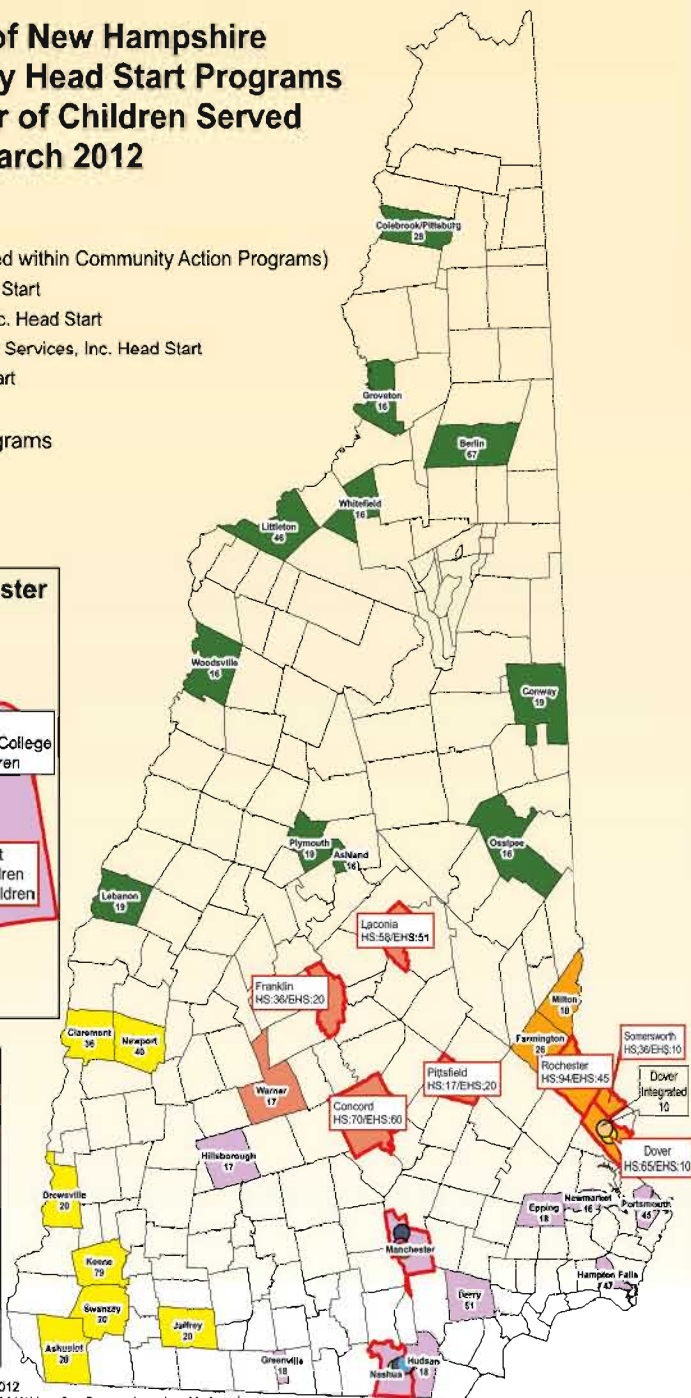
Head Start Programs (Located within Community Action Programs)

- Belknap-Merrimack Head Start
- Southern NH Services, Inc. Head Start
- Southwestern Community Services, Inc. Head Start
- Strafford County Head Start
- Tri-County Head Start
- Early Head Start Programs

HS=Head Start
EHS=Early Head Start



Map provided by DHHS/DCBCS/BBH/jh03/12/2012
C:\MappingRequests\HeadStartProgram\March2012\HeadStartProgramLocations2012.mxd



NH Head Start/Early Head Start has grown from 1,267 children and 1,219 families in 1997 to 2,290 children and 2,052 families in 2010-2011.

Eligibility

To qualify for the program:

- Children must be **NH residents aged birth to five years** and live in the same household as the parent/care-giver requesting services; and
- Pregnant women and families must **meet the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Poverty Guidelines**, with certain exceptions:
 - **Children in families without homes or in foster care are automatically eligible** for Head Start and Early Head Start services; and
 - Under the Head Start Act of 2007, programs have the option to serve a limited number of **families with incomes over 100% of the Federal Poverty Level**.

For more eligibility information, contact the program in your area.

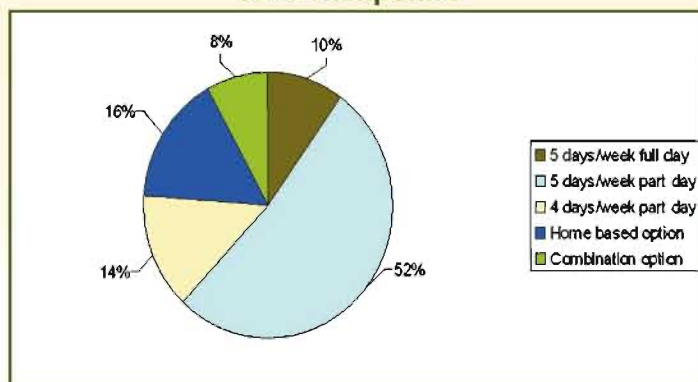
Supports and Services

Head Start and Early Head Start offer families a variety of program options, including center-based, home-based, or a combination of both. For infants and toddlers, the home-based option includes a socialization day at the center where parents learn parenting skills along with new ways to promote their children's development.

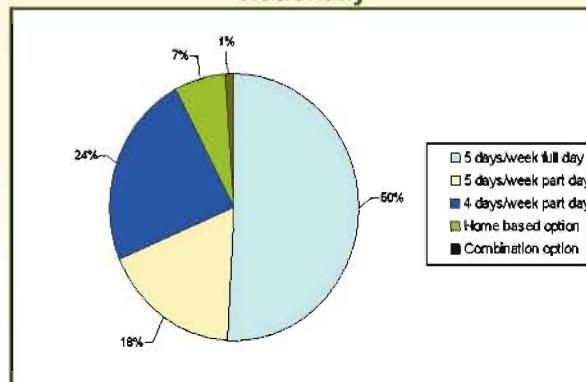
As the following charts show, most children in NH Head Start attend 5 days a week for part of the day. Nationally, half of the children participate in a 5-day, full day program option. For New Hampshire preschoolers who need a full day program while their parents are working, training or searching for a job, some Head Start programs administer full day services, while others collaborate with local child care programs.

Enrollment by Program Option

New Hampshire



Nationally



Children and families receive an array of comprehensive supports and services, as the table below shows. The top two services families received were parenting and health education.

Pregnant women also receive a variety of supports and services. Included are coordination of prenatal and postpartum health care, dental and mental health services and follow up (substance abuse prevention and treatment), prenatal education on fetal development, information on the benefits of breastfeeding, emergency/crisis intervention, and others.

Family Services	Number of Families
Received at least one Family Service	1951
Health Education	1802
Parenting Education	1766
Housing Assistance	879
Mental Health Services	659
Emergency/Crisis Intervention	632
Adult Education	306
Job Training	246
Child Abuse and Neglect	198
Child Support Assistance	150
Domestic Violence Services	121
Substance Abuse Prevention or Treatment	112
Assistance to Families of Incarcerated Individuals	87
English as a Second Language (ESL) Training	74
Marriage Education	70

Staff

Head Start/Early Head Start staff includes program directors, education/child development staff (teachers, assistant teachers, home visitors), managers (health services, family and community partnership and disability services) and others, such as cooks and bus drivers.

For the 2010-2011 program year:

- New Hampshire programs had **500 staff** and **3,275 volunteers**. **About 13% (N=67) of staff members were current or former Head Start/Early Head Start parents.**
- Compared to programs nationally, **New Hampshire's programs had a higher percentage of teachers with a bachelor's degree** in early childhood education or a related field, as shown in the table on page 8.





Head Start Preschool Teacher Education (2010- 2011)

Degree	New Hampshire %*	Nationally %*
Graduate	4.5	9.9
Baccalaureate	51.4	46.1
Associate	40.5	42.0
No ECE Credential	3.6	2.0

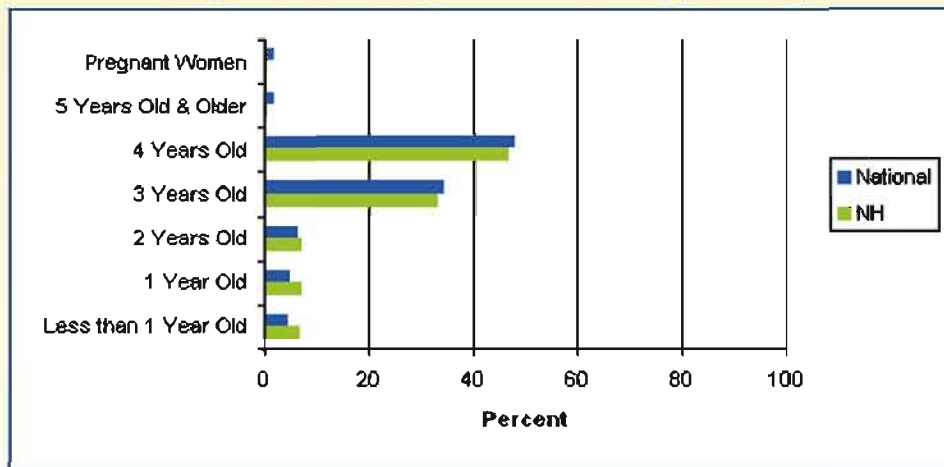
By September 2013, at least 50% of Head Start teachers nationally are required to have a Bachelor's degree, an Advanced degree or an equivalent degree in a field related to early childhood education¹². Yet, the average hourly rate is only \$14.42 for Head Start teachers in NH and \$11.10 for assistant teachers.

Head Start/Early Head Start also had an impressive number of volunteers: 3,275, which included 2,097 parents.

Children and Families

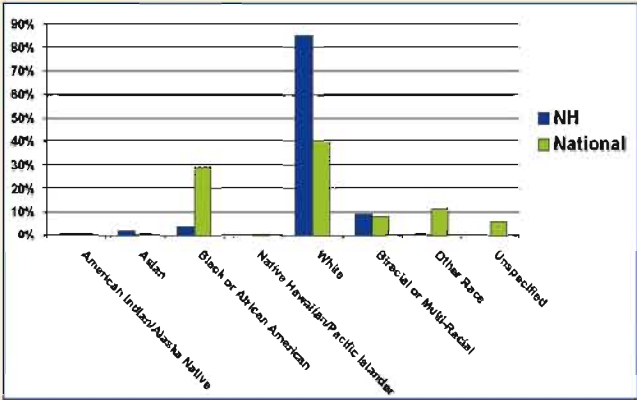
New Hampshire is funded to serve 1,764 children and their families at any given time, representing approximately 16% of eligible children¹³. Actual enrollment can be much higher. In 2010-2011, 49 pregnant women and 2,241 children in 2,052 families were served. The chart below shows how state enrollment rates are very similar to rates across the country. NH Head Start enrolls large numbers of eligible 4-year-old children (47%), followed by 3-year-olds (about 33%).

Head Start Enrollment of Pregnant Women and Eligible Children (NH and National) (Percent)

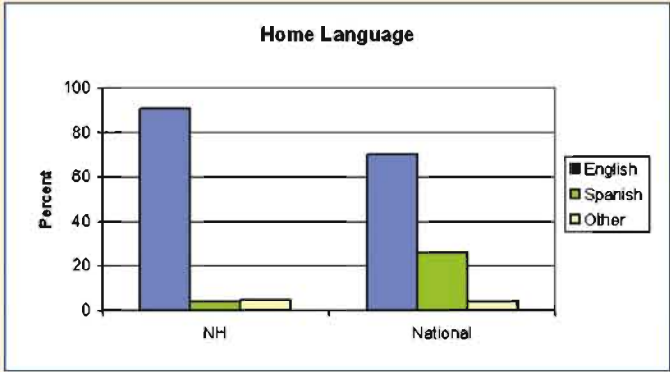


At least 10% of children served must have disabilities. Head Start preschool programs **served 225 children with a diagnosed disability**, who received preschool special education services. **Early Head Start enrolled 95 infants and toddlers and their families who also received early intervention services** (Part C of IDEA). Over half of the preschoolers with disabilities (52%) had speech or language challenges, and 42% had developmental delays.

Among the 2,290 children/families and pregnant women served by NH Head Start/Early Head Start in 2010-2011, the vast majority (82%) were white. Nine percent were bi-racial or multi-racial and 4.6% were Black or African American. A small number (3.4% combined total) were Asian, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander. Race was not specified for 0.44%.



As the chart shows, English was the family's primary language for about 91% of those served in NH, followed by Spanish (3.4%). For the remainder of the families, the primary language included African, Middle Eastern, South Asian, East Asian, European and Slavic, Caribbean, or Pacific Island languages.



In family composition and higher education, New Hampshire families resembled families nationally. However, New Hampshire had a higher percentage of families receiving TANF benefits and families who were homeless, as reflected in the table on page 10. Compared to programs nationally, New Hampshire programs assisted a greater percentage of families without homes to acquire housing during the year.



Family Composition, Education, Benefits & Housing

	NH %* N=2,052	National %* N=1,041,132
Family composition		
Two-parent families	47	43
Single-parent families	53	57
Families by education level of parents/caregivers		
High School graduate/GED	48	40
Some college/vocational school, associates degree	27	22
Bachelor's or advanced degree	5	5
Federal or Other Assistance		
Receiving TANF benefits	29	17
Receiving SSI Benefits	14	7
Receiving WIC Benefits	64	58
Families without homes served	8	4
Families without homes who acquired housing during year	47	37

*Percents were rounded

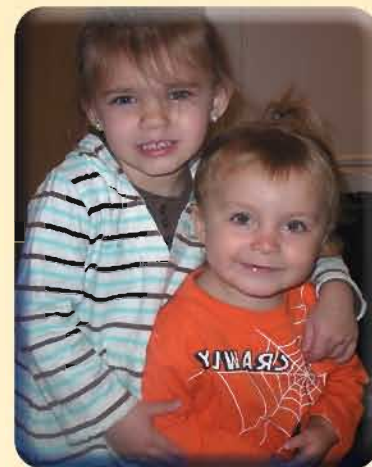
***Head Start
puts children
who are at risk
on a trajectory
for success.***



Head Start promotes school success for preschoolers (children aged 3 to five years) by focusing on growth in five essential domains:

- Language & Literacy
- Cognition & General Knowledge (includes math and science)
- Social & Emotional Development
- Approaches to Learning
- Physical Development & Health

This section includes assessment results on 710 preschoolers who were four years old at the time they entered the program. Children were assessed using either Creative Curriculum (CC)(N=383) or Work Sampling (WS)(N=327). Children are assessed three times during the program year (fall, winter, spring) and receive scores in different categories based on their performance. For CC, the categories are: forerunner I, II, III (not yet); just beginning; almost mastered; and mastered. WS categories include: not yet; in process and proficient.



In the following charts:

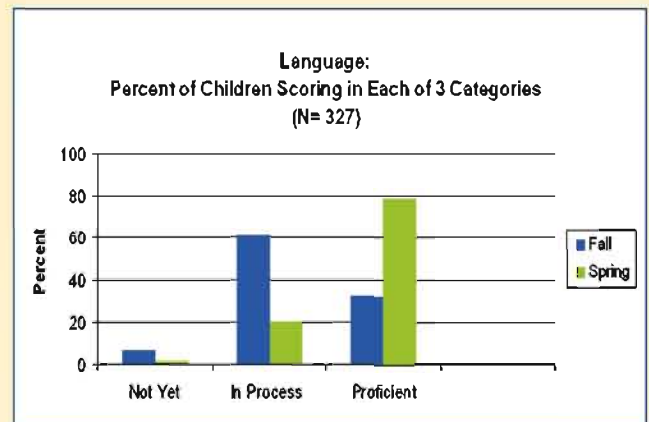
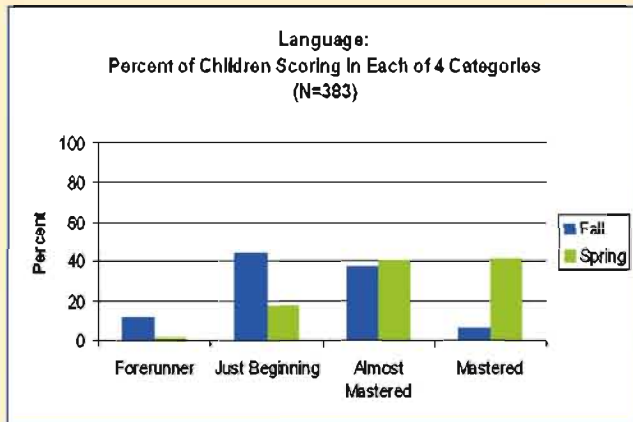
- Results are presented for three of the five essential domains: Language & Literacy; Cognition & General Knowledge (Math and Science only), and Social & Emotional Development;
- Creative Curriculum “forerunner” categories were combined; and
- Only fall/spring scores were included.



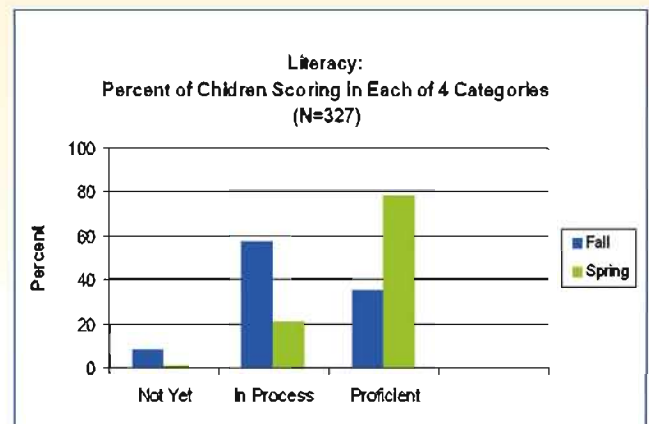
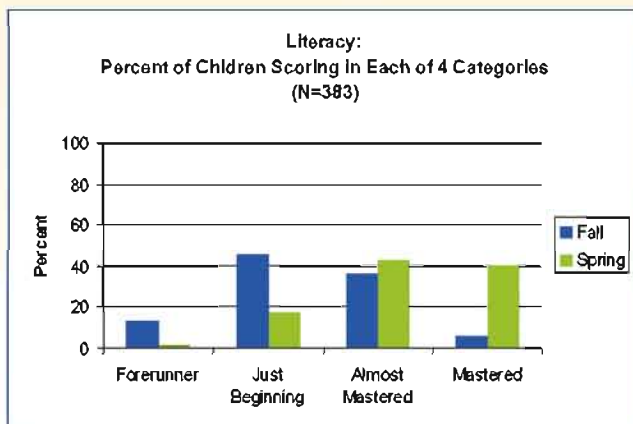
Overall, children made significant progress in all domain areas during the 2010 - 2011 program year. From the fall to the spring, there was a substantial increase in the percent of children who demonstrated, or nearly demonstrated, proficiency in each area.

There were, however, a number of children who did not progress as expected. For example, 19% of children were in the “just beginning” or less categories in the spring for both Language and Literacy. These children may have faced additional learning challenges that could result in slower-than-expected progress, such as learning the English language, overcoming cognitive disabilities or living in situations with traumatic stress. Head Start teachers continually strive to meet the individualized needs of all learners.

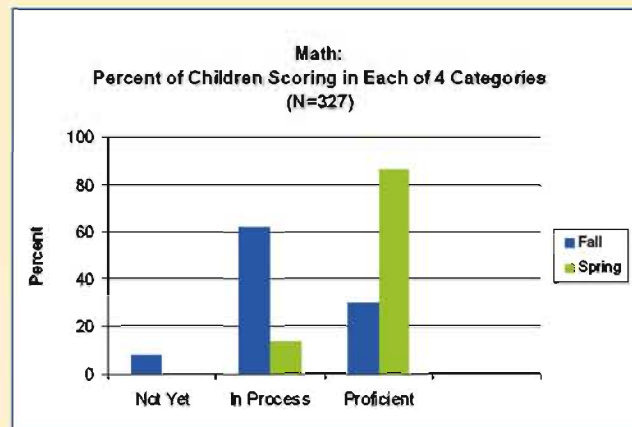
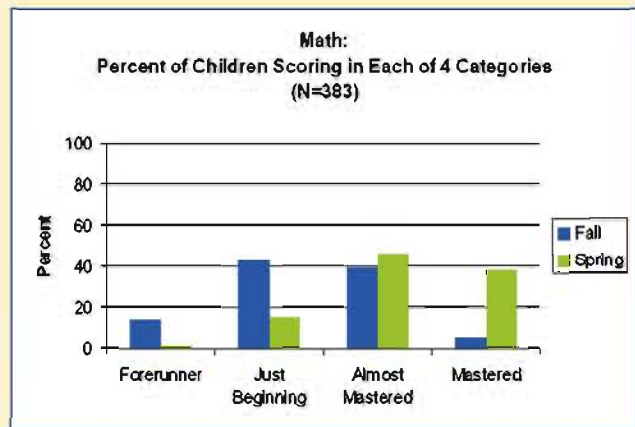
The percentage of children who had “mastered” or “almost mastered” (combined) Language skills increased from 43% in the fall to 81% in the spring (CC). The percentage of children who scored “proficient” in Language skills increased from 32% in the fall to 79% in the spring (WS).



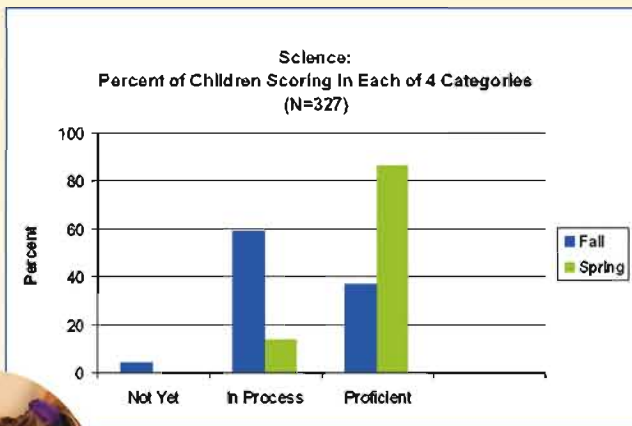
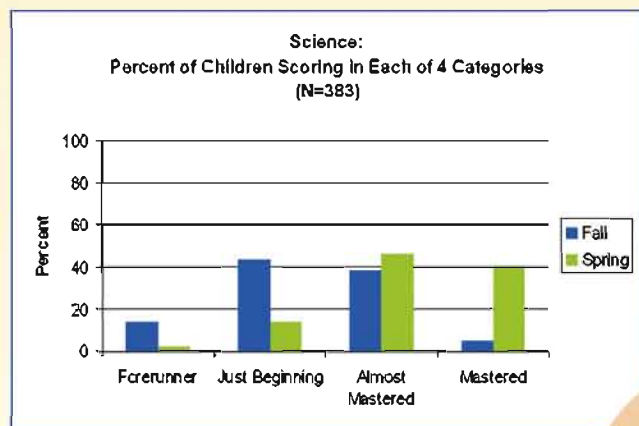
The percentage of children who had “mastered” or “almost mastered” Literacy skills increased from 42% in the fall to 82% in the spring (CC). The percentage of children who scored “proficient” in Literacy skills increased from 35% in the fall to 78% in the spring (WS).



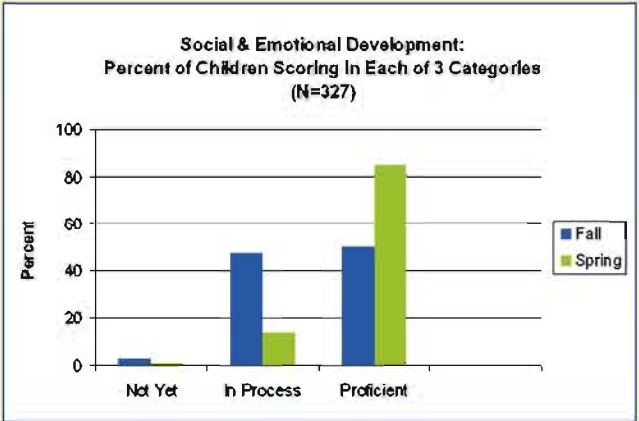
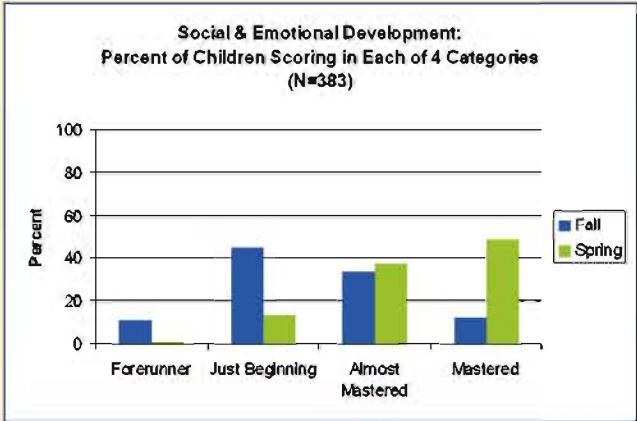
The percentage of children who had “mastered” or “almost mastered” Math skills increased from 44% in the fall to 84% in the spring (CC). The percentage of children who scored “proficient” in Math skills increased from 30% in the fall to 86% in the spring (WS).



The percentage of children who had “mastered” or “almost mastered” Science skills increased from 43% in the fall to 85% in the spring (CC). The percentage of children who scored “proficient” in Science skills increased from 37% in the fall to 86% in the spring (WS).



The percentage of children who had “mastered” or “almost mastered” Social & Emotional Development skills increased from 45% in the fall to 85% in the spring (CC). The percentage of children who scored “proficient” in Social & Emotional Development skills increased from 50% in the fall to 85% in the spring (WS).



For more information on child progress and outcomes contact the Head Start State Collaboration Office or the Head Start program in your area.



The NH Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO):

- **Fosters collaboration** and teamwork between Head Start and state and local partners concerned with families of young children;
- **Strengthens and aligns early childhood systems**; and
- **Improves access to comprehensive services** for income-eligible families of young children.

The HSSCO works closely with Head Start programs and the NH Head Start Directors Association on the following priority areas in the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007:

- School readiness, transition and alignment
- Early childhood systems
- Professional development
- Child care
- Health care (including oral health, mental health and nutrition)
- Children with disabilities and their families
- Children who are homeless and their families
- Community services
- Family literacy
- Family Assistance (child and family welfare)

Like Head Start programs, the HSSCO is funded by ACF OHS. Funds support the administrator's position and a variety of collaborative activities with key state and local, public and private partners.

For more information about the NH HSSCO, please contact:

Debra Nelson, Administrator

NH Head Start State Collaboration Office
 NH DHHS/DCYF
 129 Pleasant Street
 Concord, NH 03301
 603-271-7190
 (NH Relay) 711
Debra.J.Nelson@dhhs.state.nh.us
<http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dcyf/index.htm>



The NH Head Start Directors Association (NH HSDA):

- **Advocates for children and families; and**
- **Fosters partnerships and shares information** between Head Start and:
 - Other early childhood programs;
 - Head Start State Collaboration Office;
 - Region 1 Office of Head Start;
 - New England Head Start Association;
 - National Head Start Association; and
 - State and local agencies and organizations concerned with young children and families.

For more information about the NH HSDA, please contact:

Jeanne Agri, President
NH Head Start Association
Southern NH Services
40 Pine Street, PO Box 5040
Manchester, NH 03108
603-668-8010
jeanne@snhs.org

NH State Parent Advisory Council (PAC):

- Advises Head Start programs;
- Advises the HSSCO and participates in certain initiatives; and
- Advocates for children and families.

Members are locally elected parents from each of New Hampshire's five programs. In addition to members, Head Start staff and directors, the HSSCO and NH Children's Trust attend monthly meetings. The group shares information, receives program updates, and plans activities, including an annual Parent Advocacy Day.

**For more information on NH State PAC,
please contact the NH HSDA or NH HSSCO.**



Belknap/Merrimack

Head Start: (603) 225-3295

<http://www.bm-cap.org/headstart.htm>

Early Head Start

Laconia: (603) 528-5334

Concord: (603) 224-6492

<http://www.bm-cap.org/earlyheadstart.htm>**Southwestern Community Services**

Head Start: (603) 352-7512

<http://www.scsheps.org/headstart.htm>**Southern NH Services**

Head Start: (603) 668-8010

<http://www.snhs.org/programs/child-development-education-programs/head-start/>

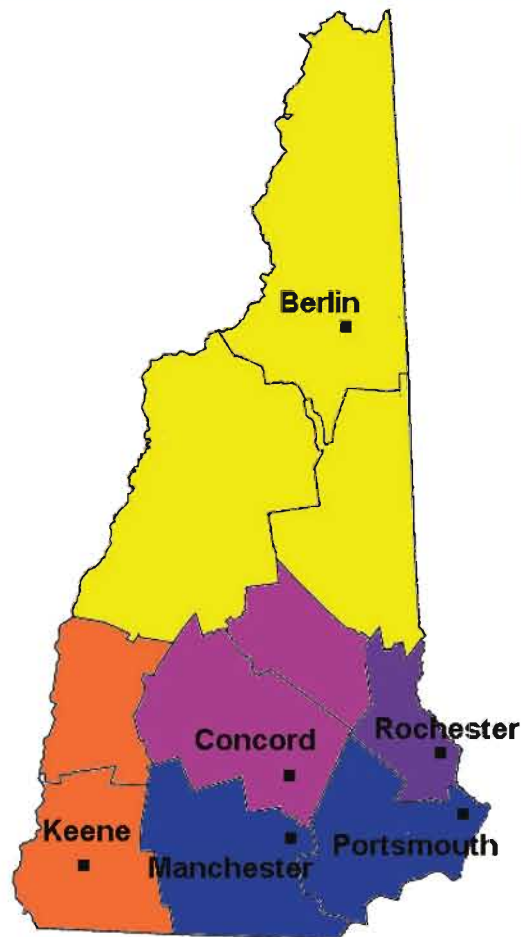
Early Head Start: (603) 668-8010

<http://www.snhs.org/programs/child-development-education-programs/early-head-start/>**Strafford County**

Head Start & Early Head Start: 603-652-0990

<http://www.scheadstart.com/>**Tri-County**

Head Start: (603) 752-7138

http://headstartprograms.org/detail/tri_county_community_action_pr_berlin_nh.html**Head Start Locator**

For a searchable, national directory of locations, addresses, and driving directions for Head Start programs, centers, and grantees, go to:

<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/HeadStartOffices>

Office of Head Start

<http://transition.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ohs>

National Head Start Association

<http://www.nhsa.org/>

Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center

<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc>

Look for the National Centers on this website under the "Training and Technical Assistance" tab, including: Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness; Early Head Start; Health; Parent, Family, and Community Engagement; Program Management and Fiscal Operations; and Quality Teaching and Learning.

NH Department of Health and Human Services, Division for Children, Youth and Families

<http://www.dhhs.nh.gov>

Office of Head Start-Region 1

JFK Building-20th Floor

Boston, MA 02203

(617) 565-1020

<http://transition.acf.hhs.gov/programs/region1>



¹ Office of Head Start, Head Start Program Fact Sheet: Fiscal Year 2010. Accessed March 26, 2012. <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ohs/about/fy2010.html>.

² Byrk, A.S., & Schneider, B. (2003). Trust in schools: a core resource for school reform. *Educational Leadership*, 60(6).

³ The National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (2011). Using the Head Start parent, family, and community engagement framework in your program. Accessed April 2, 2012. <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/family/docs/ncpfce-markers-of-progress.pdf>

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"I became a more educated, more loving, more caring parent as a result of Head Start. This is a gift I can never repay... I strive daily to pass on the skills that I learned." ¹⁴

- Head Start parent

To receive a copy of this booklet, please contact:

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